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INTERNET RESOURCES

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Intellectual Freedom

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Support for intellectual freedom, a concept codified in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Code of Ethics, is one of the core tenets of modern librarianship. According to the most recent interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, academic librarians are encouraged to incorporate the principles of intellectual freedom into all library policies. Academic freedom, that is, freedom of inquiry within the academic setting for both students and faculty, should also guide policy development within the academic library.

In the United States, intellectual freedom is rooted in interpretations of the First Amendment. International support for intellectual freedom, on the other hand, is based on the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Librarians and other information professionals around the world approach intellectual freedom as a social justice issue. In an article on knowledge societies, Peter Lor and Johannes Britz note that such societies cannot exist without freedom of access to information. The authors use their own country, South Africa, as an example to demonstrate how lack of access to information can have deleterious effects on a society. "Our experience in South Africa during the apartheid years," the authors write, "taught us that restrictions on access can cause a regime to lose touch with reality. Curtaliment of freedom of information is invariably associated with the dissemination of disinformation" (Lor & Britz, 2007, p. 394).

The web sites discussed in this column take a broad view of intellectual freedom and cover the issues from both U.S. and international perspectives.

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They provide resources for academic librarians who are interested in the issue of intellectual freedom within librarianship, and for students and faculty who are exploring the topic through coursework and research.

American Library Association – Office for Intellectual Freedom
http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/index.cfm
Association of College and Research Libraries – Committee on Intellectual Freedom
http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/resources/leadership/committees/acr-if.cfm

Visited: Summer 2010

Although somewhat difficult to navigate, the web site of the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom (ALA-OIF) is a gateway to many resources pertaining to intellectual freedom and librarianship. Directed toward both librarians and the general public, the web site includes material on topics such as Banned Books Week, Internet privacy, and academic freedom. The web site also includes contact information for members of the Office of Intellectual Freedom staff charged with helping librarians (even those who are not members of ALA) with any intellectual freedom concerns that may arise in the workplace.

The Committee on Intellectual Freedom of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL-IFC) is intended to "to advise ACRL on matters relating to intellectual freedom" (2010, "Committee Change," para. 1). The committee meets once a year at ALA Midwinter Conference and offers a program at the ALA Annual Conference. The web site helps familiarize academic librarians with the committee's activities and encourages ACRL members to volunteer for the committee. Of primary interest to academic librarians are the links to the previous year's meeting minutes and program presentations. This information provides a snapshot of current intellectual freedom concerns within academic librarianship.

In Short: Both the ALA-OIF and the ACRL-IFC web sites provide excellent starting points for inquiries into intellectual freedom. While the ACRL-IFC site is primarily intended for academic librarians, the ALA-OIF site offers resources to help librarians and the general public better understand the breadth and depth of subjects that are included under the umbrella of intellectual freedom.

Recommended.

American Association of University Professors – Academic Freedom
http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/issues/AF/

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The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is the largest professional organization for higher education faculty in the United

States. Since the organization's founding in 1915, the AAUP's mission has centered on defending academic freedom. The AAUP web site is directed at faculty members and the general public and includes numerous resources pertaining to academic freedom in higher education, including the original 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom. Selections from the so-called Redbook, AAUP's *Policy Documents and Reports*, are also available online.

The "Resources on Academic Freedom" page has links to various policy statements and revisions as well as reports from the national association's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure. The page includes information on the law and academic freedom as well as columns from the association's news bulletin. Of particular interest is the list of college and university administrations that have been censured by the association for lack of support for the principles of academic freedom.

In 2010 the AAUP published the first issue of the *Journal of Academic Freedom*. Distributed in an open access format, the journal offers a wide range of scholarship on academic freedom and related issues, including tenure and collective bargaining. The first issue includes an article on the academic freedom of graduate students and proceedings from the 2009 AAUP national conference.

In Short: The AAUP web site provides an array of resources for academic librarians, students, and faculty to understand both the concept and practical implications of academic freedom in the United Sates.

Highly recommended.

National Coalition Against Censorship
http://ncac.org

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The New York-based National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) is a broad association of nonprofit organizations including the American Association of University Professors, the National Education Association, and the American Library Association. Its primary mission is to educate the wider public regarding the importance of intellectual freedom. Two of the Coalition's projects are the *Kids' Right to Read Project*, which works to support children's First Amendment rights, and the *Knowledge Project*, which focuses on censorship in the sciences.

The NCAC's web site, directed at the general public, functions as both an introduction to the Coalition's mission and as a library of resources to support anti-censorship activities. The "What We Do" tab on the home page outlines the Coalition's current projects and upcoming events. It also contains links to general introductions of various issues related to intellectual freedom such as academic freedom, hate speech,

and self-censorship. Each introduction includes links to current news topics and resources on the issue.

Under the "Resources" tab, one can find several digital libraries that cover a wide range of intellectual freedom topics. For example, the Art Law Library contains links to notable case law on copyright, obscenity, and protected speech. The File Room is an online conceptual art piece that documents censorship cases around the world. Back issues of the Coalition's newsletter, *NCAC Censorship News,* are also archived on this section of the site.

In Short: The NCAC web site provides useful short introductions to a wide range of intellectual freedom issues for students. For those interested in more in-depth resources, the web site's digital libraries, especially the Art Law Library, are particularly valuable.

Highly recommended.

Electronic Frontier Foundation
http://www.eff.org

Visited: Summer 2010

Founded in 1990 after an alleged Secret Service raid on a gaming book publisher, the Electronic Frontier Foundation's (EFF) mission is to protect the freedom of speech in cyberspace. The EFF operates as both a legal defense firm and an electronic policy think tank. The organization's teams have won major cases that establish legal frameworks for both the communication within and the development of cyberspace.

EFF's web site is primarily directed toward the general public. Under the "Our Work" tab, one can find a list of the organization's legal cases, white papers, and a digital library categorized by issue. Each issue includes links to relevant litigations, news articles, blog posts, press releases, and other documents. For example, the DMCA subcategory of the Intellectual Property issue includes a short description of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, a white paper on the effects of DMCA over the past 12 years, and information on DMCA rulemaking including the recent cell phone "jailbreaking" exemption.

One of the EFF's projects that might be of interest to academic librarians concerns the Google Book Search settlement. Under the heading "Digital Books," the EFF offers an introduction to the Google Books case and the organization's position on reader privacy. The original *Author's Guild v. Google* (2005) complaint and other legal documents from the case are also posted on the web site.

In Short: The Electronic Frontier Foundation's web site provides a good overview of the state of cyberlaw in the United States for both the general public and academic librarians.

Recommended.

The Free Expression Policy Project
http://www.feppproject.org

Visited: Summer 2010

Marjorie Hines, a former director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Arts Censorship Project, founded the Free Expression Policy Project (FEPP) in 2000. FEPP is a think tank whose primary mission is to research and advocate for intellectual freedom issues, including free speech and copyright. The project's mission statement notes that the organization takes a "non-absolutist approach to free expression."

FEPP's web site, which is directed toward both policy makers and the general public, is somewhat cluttered and difficult to navigate. However, the "Archives" link provides a general overview of the different sections of the site. It should be noted that links on some of the web site's pages are arranged in chronological order rather than reverse chronological order as is usually found on the World Wide Web.

Resources on the site include commentaries on current intellectual freedom and free speech topics, legal filings, and white papers. The most recent posts can be found on the web site's home page under "New from FEPP." Fact sheets provide in-depth introductions to various issues, including media violence and political dissent. Although they have not been updated, FEPP's policy reports offer detailed research and analysis on the information commons, fair use, and arts funding.

In Short: Even though it is somewhat haphazard in its presentation, the FEPP web site provides informed commentary and in-depth research on intellectual freedom issues for interested librarians, students, and faculty.

Recommended.

International Federation of Library Associations – Committee on
Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression
http://www.ifla.org/en/faife

Visited: Summer 2010

The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) is the chief international organization for libraries, librarians, and other information professionals. Within the association, the Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) is dedicated to supporting intellectual freedom. FAIFE's primary mission is to educate library professionals on the values of intellectual freedom and to collect and distribute statistics regarding freedom of access and expression around the world.

FAIFE's web site includes general information about the committee and links to educational workshop materials on intellectual freedom topics. Under the "Publications" heading, FAIFE posts numerous statements,

reports, and guidelines, including the *IFLA Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom*. The biannual *IFLA/FAIFE World Report* documents the number of libraries, the availability of the Internet, and issues of privacy and access to information for 116 countries (the 2010 report is posted at www.ifla-world-report.org). Other resources on the web site include lectures and papers on intellectual freedom. Many of the papers are from the IFLA conference, which is held annually in various locations around the globe. As an international organization, IFLA publishes many of its documents in numerous languages. For example, the *Statement on Intellectual Freedom* is available in 36 languages including Tagalog, Magyar, and Farsi.

Even though the site is clean and easy to use, it should be noted that there are many duplicate links posted on the web site. It is primarily intended for librarians and other information professionals. However, students who are completing globally focused projects on freedom of expression and information will find many useful materials.

In Short: The IFLA-FAIFE web site, although primarily directed toward librarians, provides a host of resources for anyone interested in understanding intellectual freedom from an international perspective.

Highly recommended.

Article 19
http://www.article19.org

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Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (United Nations, 1948). The UK-based organization Article 19 is dedicated to combating censorship worldwide. It maintains additional offices in Senegal, Kenya, Bangladesh, Mexico, and Brazil.

Article 19's web site notes that the organization has published more than 1,900 documents, many of which are available online. Under the "Publications" heading, visitors can find these materials organized by issue, law, and region. All documents are identified by country. For example, under "Issues/Censorship," one can find an article on imprisonment of bloggers in Azerbaijan and a discussion of cable channels that were suspended in Venezuela earlier this year. The "Law" section includes a *Freedom of Expression Handbook*. This digital library contains freedom of expression case law from international courts and of Article 19's own legal analysis of these cases.

Article 19's primary audience consists of policy makers and attorneys. However, librarians who are interested in international monitoring of

freedom of expression and students researching this topic will find superb resources on the Article 19 web site.

In Short: For those interested in a broad, internationally focused exploration of intellectual freedom issues, Article 19 is an excellent starting point. *Recommended*.

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Rethinking Reference: Consistent Values, New Methods, and Different Tools

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The core duties of the reference librarian inherently mandate that the work environment is not unlike a kaleidoscope: Students and faculty revolve within and around the library, and reference and public services workers do the same; every move temporarily redesigning the library, its collections, and even its very role on campus into something (and then something else) that was previously unimaginable. Whether reference librarians consider their ideologies purist, progressive, or a mixture of the two, plans for continuous improvement and/or expansion of reference services should begin with a visit to the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) Web page. Having a broad understanding of what reference and information services means and how such services impact communities are of paramount importance, and the values of public services librarianship—customer service, discretion, knowledge of resources, privacy protection, and providing access to information—have not changed. At the same time, tools and aids highlighted in this column (including those related to instruction, collection

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